

# VIRTUAL FACILITATION DURING TIMES OF DISRUPTION

## Table of Contents

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Table of Contents .....	1
Virtual Facilitation During Times of Disruption.....	2
Current MSJC Policies and Recommendations .....	2
What is Virtual Facilitation? .....	2
Virtually Facilitate Your Class Live with ConferZoom .....	3
Step 1: Set up your synchronous meetings in Canvas .....	3
Step 2: Post an announcement in Canvas about accessing the synchronous sessions. ....	4
Step 3: Conduct your Live Class Session .....	4
Step 4: Provide Recording and Materials after the Meeting .....	5
Providing content via Canvas.....	5
Step 1: Set up & Add Announcements to your course Home Page.....	5
Step 2: Set up your Course Structure.....	6
Step 3: Record your lectures using Canvas Studio.....	7
Step 4: Publish & Communicate! .....	7
Other Important Information .....	8
Holding Office Hours.....	8
Additional Points of Consideration .....	8
Additional Support Resources.....	9
Canvas .....	9
Teaching Tips.....	9
Getting More Help .....	10



## Virtual Facilitation During Times of Disruption

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Teaching during times of potential disruption requires creative and flexible thinking about how instructors can support students in achieving essential core course learning objectives. It also requires some patience and the realization that these are temporary measures. This document offers suggestions for instructors at Mt. San Jacinto College to continue offering a student-centered learning experience in a virtual or online learning environment.

There will always be hiccups, but times of disruption are, by their nature, disruptive, and everyone expects that. Be willing to switch tactics if something isn't working. Above all, stay focused on making sure the students are comfortable, and keep a close eye on the course learning goals--while you might not be able to teach something exactly the way you imagined, as long as you're still meeting the learning goals of the course, you're doing fine.

Although we may be facing new challenges in our instructional delivery; we also have a strong and supportive community. MSJC has a distinct benefit in that we have a dedicated Distance Education team – [DELTA Services](#). We encourage everyone to take advantage of the support and guidance available in this document, but don't hesitate to connect with DELTA also – particularly for individual questions and solutions.

## Current MSJC Policies and Recommendations

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In light of recent developments and updates provided by the Chancellor's Office via a webinar on Emergency Preparation and Planning- COVID-19, Mt. San Jacinto College provided a COVID-19 update at the Board of Trustees meeting on Thursday, March 12, 2020 who approved an emergency resolution allowing for the delegation of authority to the Superintendent/President to enact all necessary precautions relative to the impact of the Novel Coronavirus at our institution.

This allows the College flexibility to offer classes and services that might be impacted should conditions change. We are ready to support faculty and staff as we shift to virtual facilitation of most classes.

Continue to monitor your email and review the [MSJC Safety Updates website](#) for the most up-to-date college recommendations. The website is especially useful for clarifying current MSJC procedures, and it will be updated frequently as things change.

## What is Virtual Facilitation?

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In order to provide continuity for our students, classes that shift from face-to-face to online will operate in a synchronous format. This means that significant instruction must still occur during the time the class is scheduled to meet and you and your students will interact in a "real time" exchange between using a video conferencing tool to create opportunities for lecture, discussion and office hours. You will also have the options of preparing and providing course materials for students in advance or after the synchronous session takes place. By providing the course materials online students may access the course materials and interact with each over a longer period of time.

During this transition time, you will want to share the new strategies for facilitating your course with your students. Modeling calm, collegiate and flexible behavior will reassure students who may feel



anxious about changes to their routines. In moving from the classroom you will want to keep MSJC [Regular Effective Contact](#) practices in mind.

Here are the MSJC recommendations for moving your face-to-face course online in a virtual facilitation model.

## Virtually Facilitate Your Class Live with ConferZoom

Confer Zoom is a video-conferencing platform provided by the CCC Chancellor's office to all MSJC faculty & staff. Zoom allows you to engage in live Web conversations with your students using audio, video, and text-based chat features.

We have submitted on your behalf the request to create a ConferZoom account based on your MSJC email. You may already have a pro account or you may have set up an account previously with a basic plan. ConferZoom is backlogged with these account requests, so please be patient as you wait for your access. One of the following three scenarios will apply to your account:

1. **If you do NOT have a ConferZoom Pro account tied to your MSJC email account already** - you will receive an invitation email from [no-reply@zoom.us](mailto:no-reply@zoom.us) welcoming you activate your account. Please follow the instructions found in the email to activate.
2. **If you have a Zoom basic plan account tied to your MSJC email account** - you will receive an email from Donna Gustafson with ConferZoom Support ([dgustafson@ccctechconnect.org](mailto:dgustafson@ccctechconnect.org)) requesting to adjust your basic account to a Pro account within the ConferZoom statewide account. You will need to confirm this adjustment by following the instructions found in the email.
3. **If you already have a ConferZoom Pro account tied to your MSJC email-** no additional action is required and existing accounts will not be interrupted.

Once your account has been set up, you will be able to schedule your synchronous meetings you're your classes through our Canvas/ConferZoom integration.

### Step 1: Set up your synchronous meetings in Canvas

At MSJC you have a separate class site (course shell) for each section you teach. You will need to provide instructions in each one of your course shells.

Here are two Canvas guides that will help you navigate the Canvas environment:

- [How do I use the Dashboard as an instructor?](#)
- [How do I view all my Canvas courses as an instructor?](#)

MSJC has an integration for Confer Zoom already installed in Canvas, you just need to enable it in your courses. To enable it go to **Settings > Navigation > Confer Zoom > Enable > Save**. This will add ConferZoom to your course navigation.

Once enabled; you can create course meetings. Remember, you should be setting up your online meetings to mirror you existing scheduled days/times to ensure students have continuity in their schedules and can still participate in all of their courses.





[Watch this video to learn how to set up your meeting schedule using Confer Zoom in Canvas.](#)

## Step 2: Post an announcement in Canvas about accessing the synchronous sessions.

If you are not familiar with using Canvas Announcements, you can review the Canvas guide on [how to add an announcement in your course](#).

In your announcement let your students know they can access your live course meetings via the Confer Zoom link in the course menu. Students do not need to have a Confer Zoom account to access your meeting. They will be able to access the meeting from any device, including their mobile device using the [zoom app](#). At the time of the meeting, students will need to select **Join** for the active course meeting from the Confer Zoom menu.

## Step 3: Conduct your Live Class Session

When you're ready to launch your class session log into your course and go to your Confer Zoom menu. Locate your meeting and select **Prepare** (if you access more than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start) or **Host** (if you are accessing within 15 minutes of the start). This will launch the zoom room and you will be able to get things set up for your session.

Students will be able to join the session live up to 15 minutes prior to the designated start time of the meeting.

### Here are some tips for using zoom:

- You may want to provide students with access to the meeting session after it has ended, if so remember to **press record** at the beginning of the meeting.
- **Review [the Host Controls in a Meeting zoom guide](#)** before beginning your first session to learn about the features available for you to use during the meeting.
- **Use screen sharing** within Zoom to share your lecture slides, websites, or digital files from your computer. If you are not familiar with hosting a meeting in zoom, you can review the zoom guide to [learn how to share your screen](#).
- **Use the chat** to allow students to ask questions along the way and moderate the conversation. You can review the [In-Meeting Chat guide](#) for more information.
  - Moderate discussion, i.e., "call on" a student with a comment to speak, to help them break into the conversation.
  - Consider asking a student (or two) to take on special roles as "chat monitors" to voice if there are questions that arise that the instructor has missed.
  - You might use the chat to troubleshoot technical problems. For example, if a student is having trouble connecting via audio or video, the chat might be a space for you as the instructor or for fellow students to work together to problem-solve. This may, again, be an opportunity to assign a student to a special role, especially if you have students eager to help on the technical aspect of things.
- **Use Breakout Rooms** to help students talk in smaller groups (just as they would do break-out groups in a larger class environment). See [Managing Video Breakout Rooms](#).
- **If you have earbuds or a headphone set, wear them!** Wearing earbuds or headphones may reduce the amount of ambient noise that your computer will pick up during your call, which will



make it easier for your students to hear you. Similarly, you may want to advise your students to wear earbuds or headphones during the call as well.

- **Advise students to mute their microphones if they are not speaking and unmute the microphones when they wish to speak.** Students may be joining Zoom calls from all kinds of different locations, many of which may create background noise that could be distracting. Encourage students to mute themselves if they're not speaking to minimize unnecessary or distracting background noise. Using the "raise hand" feature or simply seeing the microphone unmuted will give the group a visual cue for when a student wishes to speak.
- **Share the [Attendee controls in a Meeting guide](#)** from zoom with your students so they know what options are available to them for interaction during the meeting (such as raising their hand or muting their microphone).
- **Consider making materials available in advance** in Canvas so that students can access the information if screen sharing does not work. Consider saving your slides as PDFs so students will be able to access the material on their phones.

### Here are some tips for troubleshooting Zoom:

- **If your microphone is not working,** use the phone number listed in the Zoom invitation when you set up a Zoom call. You can use your phone as the microphone and audio source for your call rather than your computer's built-in microphone if necessary.
- **If your Internet connection is slow or lagging,** consider temporarily turning off your video stream and only maintaining the audio stream. Sometimes, running the web camera on your computer will use up the Internet's bandwidth in a way that might make communication challenging. Turning off the video should improve communication quality and consistency.
- **Check the "chat" space for student questions and contributions.** Some students may not have working microphones and, therefore, may be unable to contribute via voice. The chat room is a good place for students to contribute, ask questions, and be involved.
- **Check the [Zoom Help Center](#)** for additional information about using the ConferZoom tool.

### Step 4: Provide Recording and Materials after the Meeting

If you recorded your meeting, you and your students will be able to access the recording from the **Event Recordings tab** in your Confer Zoom window. (*Hint: Look for the MP4 file.*) You can post an announcement to tell students where to find the recording and you can also attach your presentation slides (or other digital materials) to the announcement.

Optionally, you can support your virtual facilitation with other resources and activities in Canvas.

## Providing content via Canvas

### Step 1: Set up & Add Announcements to your course Home Page

You can change your Course Home Page to reflect one of five layout options: Recent Activity Dashboard, Pages Front Page (recommended), the Course Modules, the Assignment List, or the Syllabus.

**Please note:** you can only add announcements to the home page of your course if you designate a Front Page.

1. [How do I set a Front Page in a course?](#)
2. [How do I change the Course Home Page?](#)



Adapted from [Teaching Effectively During Times of Disruption](#) by J. Cohn & B. Seltzer for use at Mt. San Jacinto College :: updated March 12, 2020



If you have set a home page, you can now [Add announcements to your homepage](#).

We recommend showing the three most recent announcements on the home page. Students can always access all previously posted announcements from the Announcement link in the course menu.

## Step 2: Set up your Course Structure

Canvas uses a module structure for delivering instructional content. You can think of modules like folders. You'll put all the associated "items" into a module. You may consider creating a module for a day, a week, or a topic. Once you [create up your module](#), you can add the content:

- [Pages](#): You can create content for students to read or access. Text, images, files, and videos may be placed on the Page.
  - **Share links to outside resources.** Encourage students to watch videos, read articles, etc.
  - If you plan to share PowerPoint presentations, please consider recording your lecture into [Canvas Studio](#). PowerPoint files can be very large and difficult for students to download/view. Providing your voiceover to the slides adds **you** to your lecture.
- [Assignments](#): You can create Assignments for students to upload submissions, from informal reflections to formal written assignments and projects. You can select the grading approach within the assignment. Assignments are best for submissions where the students' work will only be viewed by the instructor.
- [Discussions](#): You can create threaded, discussion forums for students to engage in written (or audio/video) dialogue with each other and respond to written prompts.
  - **Consider creating a Q&A or Help forum** as a place where students can ask questions. As this switch in delivery method may be difficult for some students, allow them a place where they can ask you, and their peers in the class for help. Encourage students to help each other if they can.
  - Create a discussion forum to facilitate communication outside of the synchronous sessions, encourage students to interact, ask questions and respond to question prompts you would use in your normal classroom discussions. **Craft discussion questions to be as clear and as specific as possible** so that students can build off of the question for a sustained response.
  - Discussions can also be used for assignments that you want students to share with each other, such as drafts or group work. All students in the class have access to content posted discussion forums (unless specified via settings).
- [Quizzes](#): Tests that you have traditionally given in the classroom may be transferred to a digital format.
  - Some initial work is required to setup the questions; but some of the grading that follows may be accomplished automatically (based on question types).
  - You can review the [comprehensive list of quiz guides](#) for additional features and settings related to quizzes. ***\*Please note that MSJC is not currently using New Quizzes, so please disregard any instructions pertaining to these features.***
  - MSJC does have access to [Proctorio](#) for additional online proctoring options; please contact [DELTA Services](#) for more information on enabling this tool in Canvas.

There are other ways to structure your content; however, the module structure is the format that many students may be familiar with if they have previously taken an online class at MSJC as it is our recommended structure. For more information about different ways to organize canvas content, [check out this video by Jenae Cohn](#).



### Step 3: Record your lectures using Canvas Studio

If you are not comfortable presenting live, another good option is to record any lecture material and upload it to Canvas. This will allow your students to view the materials independently and then you can facilitate a discussion and/or activity during your live synchronous session.

We recommend that you record lectures using Canvas Studio. You can record directly from the Canvas interface, and use one video across all your sections. You will also have access to [video analytics](#) to see which students have viewed the videos.

Here are the guides for getting started quickly using Canvas Studio:

- [How do I use Canvas Studio through the Rich Content Editor?](#)
- [How do I record a Canvas Studio video with a webcam in a course?](#)
- [How do I record a Canvas Studio screen capture video in a course?](#)

You can view the [comprehensive set of Canvas Studio Guides](#) to learn about all of the functions and features of Canvas Studio.

In addition to recording your videos directly in Canvas Studio, you can opt to record your videos in an outside tool, like TechSmith Snagit, and upload them to Canvas Studio to take advantage of the other benefits Studio provides. TechSmith has provided full access to Snagit through the end of June, 2020 help to our organization as we navigate this sudden increased demand for learning.

Get TechSmith Snagit

1. [Install Snagit](#) on a Windows or Mac computer.
2. Check out the [Snagit product webpage](#) as a quick overview.
3. Check out the library of [Snagit tutorials](#) for in-depth information.

If you don't want to record your own videos, you can also [use Canvas Studio to add YouTube videos](#) as instructional resources.

### Step 4: Publish & Communicate!



The most important step is to [Publish your course](#), and all of the content (modules, pages, discussions, quizzes, etc.). You can do all the great set up, post announcements, and record videos; but, if you forget to publish your course, your students won't be able to see any of it.

Keep your students up to date by posting regular [Announcements](#) in Canvas. While this may be stressful for you, remember that is a stressful time for them too and that we are all experiencing something new. Open and honest communication will help everyone be as successful as possible.

Suggest that students check their [Canvas notification preferences](#) to make sure they are set to receive announcements via email and/or text message.

You can use the [Canvas Inbox](#) as another way of managing communication with students. This feature operates similar to email, but is accessed via Canvas. Students may message you directly here, so make sure you are checking it in addition to your standard MSJC email inbox.





## Other Important Information

This document is a guide for getting started with moving your classroom instruction online in an emergency situation. It is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list of effective online teaching practices. As you get more comfortable navigating Canvas and Confer Zoom, we highly recommend that you contact [DELTA Services](#) and refer to the provided list of resources to gain additional training and ideas for effective and enriching online learning experiences.

It's also incredibly important to ensure that you are communicating with your students. If you will not be available for a day to two, please inform your students. Make sure they know how to contact you in an emergency situation. Establish your presence by posting check-in announcements and participating in discussion forums. Try to be flexible as students navigate the challenges of learning new technologies. Keep in mind that not all students have access to stable internet connections or desktop devices; in fact, many of them may be interacting with your course through a mobile device. Acknowledge that issues will arise; we will all need to be patient and empathetic.



If you need assistance with setting up an activity that is beyond the scope of this document, contact [DELTA](#) and refer to any additional support options provided by MSJC during the disruption.

### Holding Office Hours

You can set up office hours for your courses the same way you set up synchronous lecture sessions using ConferZoom. During your online office hours, **encourage students to share their screen with you**. Screen sharing is possible not just for the instructor in Zoom, but for students too. Help your students navigate towards a screen sharing option so that they can show you their work on their screen. Refer back to the [synchronous delivery setup options](#) for more information on setting up and communicating to students about online office hours.

### Additional Points of Consideration

#### Accessibility

- If you have students who need an accommodation, please have them contact the [Accommodation Service Center \(formerly DSPS\)](#) directly to request services.

#### Adding your Syllabus

- You may want to add an adjusted [Syllabus to Canvas](#) for students to refer to.

#### Grading

- Use [SpeedGrader](#) to provide feedback on student assignments. Any grades entered in Speed Grader are automatically added to the Canvas Gradebook.
- You can manually enter and edit grades in the [Gradebook](#).

#### Think about ways to virtually accomplish your normal classroom activities

- If possible, consider adjusting your course schedule to move high-stakes activities or exams to be facilitated after the disruption to reduce students' potential anxiety about performing high stakes assessment in an unfamiliar format.





- Have students write and comment together on a shared Google Doc.
- Try using [Office 365 Forms](#) or [Google Forms](#) to collect student responses, and then share results with students online.
- Have students record [Canvas Studio](#) Videos of presentations
- Have students create virtual posters using [Adobe Spark](#) (free)

## Additional Support Resources

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### Canvas

- [Canvas Instructor Guide Index](#)
- [Canvas Video Guides Index](#)
- [Canvas Student Guide Index](#)
- [Canvas Studio Index \(Recording Video\)](#)
- [Monitoring Issues in Canvas \(Canvas Status\)](#)

### Teaching Tips

#### Guides

- [Tips for Quickly Converting an Online Course](#)
- [Online Teaching for Instructional Continuity, Mira Costa](#)
- [Scaling Online Learning When the Classroom Closes](#)
- [Student to Student Interactions Guide](#)
- [Core Rules of Netiquette](#)
- [Creating an Engaging Online Course](#)
- [Practical Tip for Teaching Online Temporarily](#)
- [Effective Online Teaching Practices](#)

#### Regular Effective Contact

- [What Is Regular and Effective Contact](#)
- [How Can Interactions Support Active Learning](#)
- [Being Present in Your Online Course](#)
- [Creating an Effective Online Instructor Presence](#)
- [Five Ways to Build Community in an Online Class](#)
- [What Online Teachers Need to Know](#)

#### Assignments and Discussion Boards

- [Designing Effective Online Assignments](#)
- [Active Learning in Online Courses](#)
- [5 Tips for Improving Online Discussion Boards](#)
- [Discussion Board Best Practices](#)
- [Five New Twists for Online Discussions](#)
- [Dynamic Discussion Boards](#)



## Peer Review & Group Projects

- [Digital Tools for Peer Review](#)
- [Sample Digital Peer Review Procedure](#)
- [Canvas Peer Review](#)
- [Setting Up Peer Review in Canvas](#)
- [Group Projects in Online Classes](#)

## Getting More Help

### DELTA Services

DELTA will continue to provide our standard drop-in hours at both of our locations (unless otherwise posted)

- SJC room 1425 & MVC room 2106
- Monday & Tuesday; 9:00am – 12:00pm
- Wednesday & Thursday; 1:00pm – 4:00pm

We will provide additional training and support as needed and can be facilitated. Please continue to [check our website](#) for updated training and support opportunities.

### California Virtual College

The CVC-OEI is hosting a series of instructional designer office hours on Fridays through April 3:

- 9:00 – 10:00 AM: Shawn Valcarcel
- 12:00 – 1:00 PM: Cheryl Chapman
- 4:00 – 5:00 PM: Helen Graves

Instructors moving their courses online are encouraged to attend and prepare for remote instruction with the goal of instructional continuity. Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:  
<https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/831127113>.

### Canvas Help

- Weekday Canvas Support (ATS)  
(951) 487-3767 Weekdays Only: M-TH 8am - 5:30pm F 8am-12pm PST
- Faculty After Hours Canvas Support  
(833) 345-2893 Nights/Weekends/Holidays Only, M-TH 6pm - 8am Friday after 12pm PST  
Sat/Sun all hours
- Student After Hours Canvas Support  
(877) 891-6965 Nights/Weekends/Holidays Only, M-TH 6pm - 8am Friday after 12pm PST  
Sat/Sun all hours

